



# **Ammerman Campus Forum**

**Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness  
March, 2012**

## INTRODUCTION

A SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis is a strategic framework that colleges have been utilizing for decades. While the terminology may seem foreign, it has proven useful in decision-making and direction setting given its ability to align internal operations with external conditions. More specifically:

- **Strengths** are attributes of the college that have a positive effect on achieving its goals.
- **Weaknesses** are attributes of the college that have a negative effect on achieving its goals.
- **Opportunities** are external conditions that will likely have a positive effect on the college achieving its goals (if leveraged).
- **Threats** are external conditions that will likely have a negative effect on the college achieving its goals (if left unaddressed).

On February 21, 2012, in the Montauk Point Room of the Babylon Student Center, 20 participants including faculty, administration, staff and students from the Ammerman Campus participated in a campus SWOT exercise facilitated by the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness (OPIE). This exercise mirrored the process used as part of the college-wide strategic planning effort during a 2- day workshop in January conducted by HR Synergy. As the first step in the interactive portion of the session, participants were encouraged to write the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, unique to the Ammerman Campus, on color coded sticky notes. After the individual statements were gathered, participants grouped the individual statements in categories and were then asked to rank the three most important themes in each of the categories. Number one was used to identify the most important, number two was used to identify the second most important, and number three was used to identify the third most important. For purposes of scoring, the numbers were transposed when adding up the final tally within each category (a 1 was worth 3 points, a 2 was worth 2 points, and a 3 was worth 1 point). At the end of the forum, the results were tabulated and the results of this analysis are listed below. The Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness would like to thank Dr. Sherwood and the Ammerman campus faculty and staff who made this forum possible.

### AMMERMAN CAMPUS SWOT

- **Strengths:** The top three strengths were;
  - Faculty/Staff
  - Educational Opportunities
  - Student Activities

In summary, participants indicated that the faculty and staff had a caring attitude, were active, dedicated, and highly qualified. The participants noted that the knowledgeable faculty and staff were willing to help and often went “above and beyond” for students. The educational opportunities strengths listed by the participants included the robust academic programs and honors program. The student activities strengths included diverse academic offerings, the affordability of the college, and its open enrollment.

- **Weaknesses:** The top three weaknesses were:
  - Faculty/Staffing
  - Money
  - Communication

In summary, participants identified the diminishing number of faculty lines and lack of professionalism by some faculty and staff to be the top weakness. The lack of money, disproportionate share of financing coming from the county and state, and lack of a substantial endowment were all noted as a weakness. Communications between faculty, students, and administrators were also seen as weaknesses on the campus.

- **Opportunity:** The top three opportunities were;
  - Reputation
  - Communication (Tie 2)
  - Funding (Tie 2)
  - Infrastructure

In summary, participants identified that an opportunity exists to improve on our already good reputation by increasing the national attention on the role and purpose of the community college. While listed as a weakness, participants also felt that increased communication between counseling and faculty provides an opportunity to improve student advising. Funding was also listed as a weakness; however, the participants felt that the college’s ability to give students a reasonably priced education provides an opportunity to continue to attract new students. New buildings and capitol projects as well as more effective utilization of campus facilities in the summer months were also highlighted as opportunities.

- **Threats** The top three threats were;
  - Money
  - Student Preparedness
  - Enrollment Trends (Tie 3)
  - The way we do “business” (Tie 3)

In summary, participants identified financial barriers, which include budget restraints, decreased funding from SUNY, budget cuts and a lack of funding to support physical and academic resources as the top threats to the Ammerman campus. Participants also felt that student under preparedness is resulting in an increasing amount of developmental education and a decreasing number of “advanced students” – a situation that both increases the amount of resources needed for developmental education and reduces the number of upper-level sections. Also identified as a threat was the declining enrollment, which is a direct result of the decreasing number of high school students as well as the people leaving Long Island. The way we do “business” and the use of a business model for education were also seen as threats. Participants identified a disconnect between upper administration and the faculty and students as well as increasing pressure to assess all that we do without additional staff to conduct the assessments.

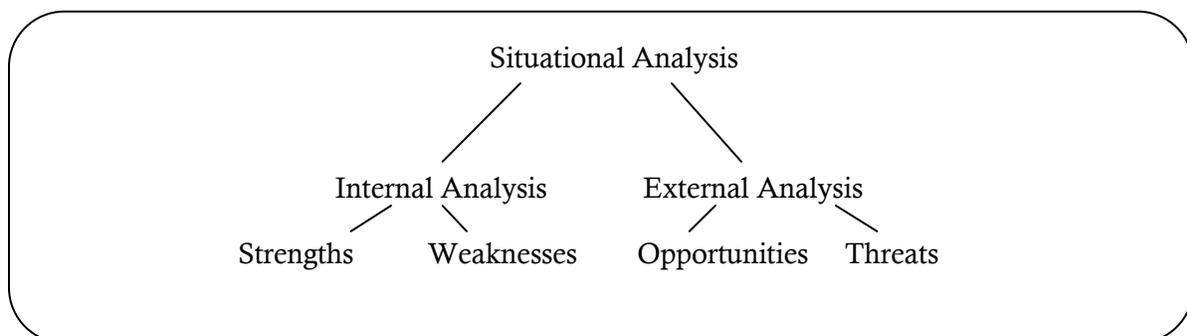
**Table 1 Summary of Ammerman Campus SWOT**

<b>Strengths</b>		<b>Weaknesses</b>	
Faculty staff	40 (15)	Faculty staffing	34 (13)
Educational opportunities	34 (15)	Money	29 (13)
Student activities	12 (11)	Communications	11 (9)
Infrastructure	1 (1)	Campus in other schools	0 (0)
Grants Office	2 (1)	Student issues	4 (2)
Momentum	1 (1)	Technology/banner	3 (2)
		Diminishing infrastructure	8 (5)
		Use of assessment results	1 (1)
<b>Opportunity</b>		<b>Threats</b>	
Reputation	18 (8)	Money	36 (13)
Communications	13 (7)	Student preparedness	21 (12)
Funding	13 (5)	Enrollment trends	14 (7)
Infrastructure	3 (2)	The way we do business	14 (8)
Technology	10 (5)	Attitude	5 (4)
Grants	1 (1)		
Students	7 (6)		
People	11 (4)		

# = total score

# in ( ) =number of participants who voted

**Table 2**



## **Bibliography**

Net MBA <http://netmba.com/strategy/swot/> retrieved January 25, 2012

Idaho State University SWOT analysis resource page <http://isu.edu/acadaff/swot/index.shtml>  
retrieved January 25, 2012